



The Other Sister

Rowan Coleman

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Perfect for fans of Jojo Moyes, Dorothy Koomson and Liane Moriarty, this is an uplifting and heartfelt novel from the author of *The Memory Book*, which was featured in the Richard & Judy book club 2014

Willow and Holly are identical twins. They are everything to each other. Holly calls Willow her rock, her soul mate, her other half. And Willow feels the same about Holly. They are alike in every respect except one - Willow is afraid on the inside. And all because of a secret - one that binds the sisters closely together and yet has meant their adult lives have taken two very different paths.

Willow often feels there are large parts of her missing, qualities she only knows she's lacking because she sees them in her sister. For a very long time Willow has felt separated from Holly by one terrible moment in time - a moment that meant Willow's life was never the same again. And when the past catches up with her, Willow realises it's finally time for her to face her fears, and - with Holly's help - learn to laugh out loud once more...

The Other Sister Details

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Author : Rowan Coleman

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From Reader Review The Other Sister for online ebook

Katie Baker says

Apart from the mystical element which I was not quite sure of and wondered why it was necessary and the obsession with weight and appearance which didn't sit quite comfortably with me, I really enjoyed this book. After struggling to read any fiction for ages it has given me my reading mojo back.

Saarah Niña says

Loved the story

This book has the power to shock you to the very core. There were so many unpredictable twists and turns. A spontaneous kind of humorous love story. But, really it's a book of its own unique genre: there is romance, comedy, family love and right in the middle: the aim to just be happy with what you have.

Willow and Holly, twins, alike in every way except body shape. Willow is ashamed for her 'fat' body, she feels undesirable, and undeserving of love. That quickly changes when a pair of shoes walk into her life, and soon she has a chance to make up for her terrible past, she has an opportunity to seek forgiveness.

Note, that my above synopsis is heavily condensed. I've left out all the gems that make this such an awesome read. This book will definitely garner smiles, muffled, barely contained laughter and an all-round fuzzy feeling you get after drinking a cup of warm tea (or your preferred beverage.) This book was definitely a favourite for me, I loved the idea of fate, coincidence, second chances, redemption. All in all, a lovely book. There's also a significant love triangle thrown into the mix- usually I'm not a huge fan of these since they are so rare in real life but, with Rowan Coleman's writing it actually seemed possible. I will definitely keep an eye out for Rowan's future books.

I received this book through NetGalley.

Joan says

'The Other Sister' by Rowan Coleman is a story about identical twins Willow and Holly who are so close that they feel a part of each other. As they grow up, first of all with their single parent mother, and later on with their stepfather, one of the twins begins to change. Willow becomes the 'bad' sister whilst Holly remains the 'good sister'. This changes everything, especially for Willow. Once bright and vivacious, Willow loses her self-confidence, her behaviour changes drastically and her mother begins to think of her as a trouble-maker, a rebel and a liar and they eventually become estranged. Gone is the heady laughter, the care-free smile and the sunny nature. She becomes despondent, she never laughs and her self-esteem plummets. She gains weight, just whizzing through the dress sizes whilst Holly remains slim and beautiful, Willow feels lumpy and lacks confidence in herself. Holly marries and is blissfully happy, especially when she becomes the mother of twin girls, whilst Willow's marriage fails, she not only loses her husband but also her treasured step-daughter, and she now lives a lonely life, convinced she is unattractive and incapable of hanging on to any relationship. She feels simply worthless. Still the girls are close though, they share their secrets and the bond between them is stronger than ever.

Then Willow stumbles on a second-hand shop she has never seen before. In the window she gazes upon a gorgeous pair of shoes. She just has to have them so she prays that they will fit her. As she walks out of the shop in her new shoes, she feels the tides of change sweeping her away. Bit by bit her fractured life begins to mend and at last she feels that she has the courage to visit her childhood home.

'The Other Sister' is a novel about having the courage to change your life. It is about grabbing happiness, love, family support, understanding and making the right choices. I enjoyed reading this novel and loved the fluid and warm storytelling. The characters were skilfully created and carefully developed and I really liked the relationship between Holly and Willow. Rowan has twins boys of her own and she managed to capture the nuances of twin behaviours really well, especially of Holly's young twin daughters, who made me smile constantly, as often young children do. I found the first part of the story quite slow moving, but I knew that I would soon be eagerly turning the pages and the last part of the novel was really absorbing and very emotional.

I would like to thank NetGalley and publisher Ebury Digital for a copy of this novel, sent out to me in return for an honest review. This is a good read within the genre. I have enjoyed all of Rowan's novels and I was really happy when my request to review 'The Other Sister' was granted. I was not disappointed in the least.

Jo says

'The Other Sister' felt very unlike the previous Rowan Coleman books I have read. After reading the first few chapters, having expected something else, I wasn't at all sure I was going to enjoy it; however, Rowan Coleman has not let me down before, and it wasn't that I didn't like the story - so on I read! What a good job I did!

'The Other Sister,' may be Willow, or it could be the character that she might have been if events hadn't happened the way they did. On the surface Willow presents as a hard-working, dependable, slightly quirky sort of character who has made some big mistakes in the past, but has moved on and made a life for herself. Divorced, living alone and buying increasingly bigger dress sizes(!) there are a few people in her life that Willow has time for; her boss, her beloved twin sister Holly and family, and her best friend Daniel being among the few.

Into this predictable mix bursts Chloe, her ex-step-daughter, fifteen, pregnant and in need of help, followed quickly by Chloe's father who also happens to be Willow's very estranged ex-husband, Sam who evidently loves Chloe, but is desperately struggling with his difficult teenage daughter. Confused? So is Willow, who very much wants to do the right thing by both Chloe and Sam but is trying to work out what exactly the right thing is!

As Chloe bursts into Willow's life, so she becomes the catalyst to the re-emergence of events from Willow's past, events that become slightly darker than we'd anticipated and which for Willow, still need closure before she can be truly happy!

Or was Chloe the catalyst? There is a funny little piece in the book which involves a mysterious little shop tucked away in an alley, a pair of *a-mazing* shoes, a moth eaten fur coat and a token. Once Willow has purchased these items her life begins to change and we are left wondering if this is some sort of 'Mr Benn' moment (Google children's tv series from the 70s youngsters!) This scene for me is slightly jarring and in my opinion doesn't quite belong to the book - but that is entirely subjective of course.

In general a really good read which I thoroughly enjoyed.

Elizabeth Grieve says

An enjoyable read, about two sisters whose lives now differ in many ways. Willow sees herself as less attractive and less successful than her sister, but there's a childhood secret which explains why their paths diverged so much. Well written, and with certain magical element to it, this is a great read. Thanks to the publisher for a review copy.

Christine says

enjoyed this book , never read any of the authors books but would read another sometime.

Rachel Gilbey says

The Other Sister has hidden depths to it, which completely took me by surprise. I could tell the story was leading up to something, and there had to be a reason why Willow and Holly, identical twins, seemed to be so different, but I just wasn't expecting what was revealed.

Willow on the whole doesn't tend to like people, she likes her sister and her best friend, but generally doesn't want to spend her days with anyone else. She lives alone, and has a job in a talent agency and has an ex husband plus ex-stepdaughter.

Over the course of just a few days Willow ends up sharing her house with a famous actress that is a client of the agency, needing a bolthole to lay low, and her ex-step daughter is suddenly back in her life too. What is seemingly the trigger of this is one day when Willow was heading back to the office, she accidentally took a wrong turn, and found a shop that had the most magnificent pair of shoes in stock.

Whether you believe it or not, these shoes, plus some of the other things in this shop appear to have magical qualities, or at the very least life altering consequences, and from that moment Willow is suddenly more open to people than she has been for years, more attractive to men than she has been for a long time, and generally is liking her own reflection a lot more.

I loved the scenes involving Willow, India the actress and Chloe (the stepdaughter), and there are some great moments between the three of them. The trip to Hamleys brought a huge smile to my face as well as reminders of my own childhood.

As I have said there is far more to this story than I want to say, mainly as its far more fun to discover everything for yourself. What I will say is from the start I was interested in Willow's story, and as more threads and characters were introduced, I felt more and more involved and just wanted to help Willow change to become a more rounded person.

I've read quite a few of Rowan Coleman's books now, and I really enjoyed this one, it may not become a new favourite, but its still a lovely piece of writing, with warm hearted humour, as well as some far more serious subject matter too.

Thank you so much to Netgalley and Ebury Press for this copy of the book which I have reviewed honestly.

Cheryl Bellingham says

this book starts out very light hearted. On the purchase of the shoes I thought this is probably not a book for me but then I read on and was so pleased I did Willows life is totally shaped by a childhood secret. Slowly over the course of the book you discover how this has shaped all her relationships It's beautifully done the past does not have destroy the future but for that to happen you have to face it.

Jenny L says

A good read from Rowan Coleman, whose books I've read before. The shocking secret is not really surprising when it is revealed. The ending is pleasant and overall makes for a nice story.

Rachel Sirup says

At first I thought I was probably wasting my time with this book because the first 10 chapters were just filled with unnecessary dialogue and all the characters seemed so shallow. I kept pushing though thanks to all of the reviews about this book on Goodreads. They kept talking about this "secret" and I'm not for one to miss out on anything. I would say give this book a try when you have the time. After page 207 though, I read everything in one sitting. With that said, I'm off to bed.

Linda says

Disappointing. Nowhere near the same writing quality as The Memory Book.

S says

A light and hearted easy read about family and love. Willow is an extremely relatable character with all her insecurities and it was exciting following her on her journey to rediscover herself and how she overcomes her problems. Plot-wise, it was rather straightforward without mind-blowing twists. However, the likeable characters and the occasional humour would keep you going until the end.

Karen Whittard says

Thank you to Netgalley, Penguin Random House Uk and Rowan Coleman for the opportunity to read this book for an honest review.

You can find my review on both Goodreads and Amazon from today. On Goodreads under my name Karen

Whittard and on Amazon under my name K.e.whittard.

A wonderfully uplifting and heartfelt book. This is the first I have read by Rowan Coleman but it certainly won't be the last.

Willow and Holly are identical twins. They are best friends, soul mates and each other's rock. They are both alike in every aspect except Willow has a secret. It's one that sees the twins estranged from each other as adults. When the past catches up to Willow however it is Holly that she turns to for help. Because it is time to face her fear and tackle things head on but she can't do that alone.

It is a lovely story that shows how events can change someone's life drastically. It shows the power of family and friendship and how you don't have to face things on your own. It shows the power of owning up to events and facing your fears head on.

The characters in this book are wonderful and it is such a lovely uplifting read.

Happy reading everyone

Sally Anggraeni says

Just like the ordinary happy ending. Fairy tales based on traumatic story life. 'FTV banget'. Why? Because 'the girl' loved by three men at once. 'oh waw, warbiasaa' puffft. It's most likely women's dream -.- loved by more than one man and the others are left behind, seeing a woman they could never have lived happily with another guy. Traumatic problem solved for good. Ciao!

Book Inspector says

Did you read the description of this book? Did it leave you intrigued and curious? It definitely did to me. This book is about Willow, talent agent PA who struggles with her love life, but when one day her ex stepdaughter shows up by her door, her life turns around making her realise what she wants from life. Willow is a very interesting character, who has messed up mind, great confusion in her life and very low self esteem. Surprisingly that makes her quite relatable to a common person. There were always secrets mentioned which influenced why Willow is the way she is, but it was very well kept till the end of the book, and let me tell you one thing, that secret got me really disturbed, I was not expecting that. Other characters are quite interesting as well, but the book mainly concentrates about Willow and her problems. The book was written only from Willow's perspective and did not portray the feelings and thoughts of other characters, which is a bit of a bummer, because I would not mind knowing what was going on in the stepdaughter's and the men's in her life minds.

The story of this book is very well thought through and very interesting to read. There are lots of twists and turns with a hint of magic (or was it not?). One thing to point out though, the ending of the book is quite predictable, but it did not disappoint me. I think this book is a real treat and I would strongly recommend it. It is witty, beautiful, compelling but at the same time sorrowful. There are a lot of things going on in this book so it will not bore you.
